(b) and (c) The survey is in progress and the the report is expected by 31.3.2000. Further consideration of the project will be possible once the survey report is received.

Gauge Conversions in Karnataka

517.SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many gauge conversion works are in progress in Karnataka;

(b) what is the physical progress of each of those projects;

(c) why some of the projects, which were taken up more than five years back, have not been completed; and

(d) by when these are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) Four gauge conversion projects are in progress in Karnataka. The details regarding their progress and reasons for delay, if any, are as under:—

(i) Arsikere-Hassan-Mangalore (236 kms)

The section between Arsikere-Hassan (46.50 km) was commissioned on 23.8.1996 and Hassan-Sakleshpur (42.00 kms) on 26.1.1998. The works on remaining section between Sakleshpur to Mangalore (147.50 kms) are progressing well and achieved overall progress of 35%. The delay in completion of the project is due to executing works in difficult terrain of 56 kms in Ghat section of Sakleshpur to Subramanya Road and constraints of resources.

(ii) Yeswanthpur-Baiyyappanahalli-Salem (197 kms) (60 kms in Karnataka)

The work on the section between Salem to Baiyyappanahalli (177 kms) was completed and commissioned on 12.1.97. The works on the remaining portion i.e. Baiyyappanahalli to Yeswanthpur (20 kms) are also completed but could not be commissioned due to public agitation for providing a Road-over bridge at Lingarajapuram level corssing between Baiyyappanahalli and Hebbal in the section. Since the work has already been completed, there is no delay.

(iii) Birur-Shimoga Town-Talguppa (161 kms)

(Material Modification of Bangalore-Hubli Gauge conversion Project)

Gauge conversion of Bangalore-Hubli (469 kms) was completed and commissioned on 29.5.95 and the branch line between Birur-Shimoga town (63 kms) sanctioned as first material modification to Bangalore-Hubli project was commissioned for passenger

traffic on 1.10.94. The work on the left over portion from Shimoga town to Talguppa (98 kms) was sanctioned in 1997 as second material modification to Bangalore-Hubli and is in good progress. The overall progress achieved on this section is 15% and there is no delay.

(iv) Solapur (Hotgi)-Gadag (300 kms.)

The project was canctioned in 1993-94. The work has been taken up in phases and sections between Solapur-Hotgi and Hotgi-Bijapur have been completed and commissioned. The work is in progress on rest of the section which will be completed in the coming years depending upon availability of resources.

(d) No target dates have been fixed. These projects are being progressed as per priority fixed by the Government and will be completed in the coming years subject to availability of resources.

Frequency of Rajdhani Express Trains

518. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposal to increase the frequency of some Rajdhani Express trains is under consideration of Government;

(b) whether the 2421/2422 Bhubaneshwar Rajdhani Express is one of them;

(c) if so, from which date the frequency of Bhubaneshwar Rajdhani is proposed to be increased; and

(d) the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) : Do not arise.

Construction of Road Over-Bridges in Orissa

519. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals sent by the Orissa Government for construction of Road over-bridges during the last three years;

(b) the action initiated by Government in response to such proposals; and

(c) the details regarding the present position of construction of Road over-bridges in that State?